Appendix 10: s53(2)(a) Fast Track Approvals Act 2024, Technical Advice - Planning

Date	3/11/2025
To	Joanne Mitten, Principal Consents Planner, Environment Canterbury
From	Victoria Watt, Senior Planner, Planning, Environment Canterbury
Project advice provided for	NZTA – Woodend Bypass Project
Documents referred to	Substantive Application Report 2G Regional and District Objectives and Policies Assessment
Qualifications	Bachelor of Science, majoring in Geography and Environmental Science. 6 years of experience in consenting and policy planning.
Code of Conduct	I confirm that I have read and agree to comply with the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses contained in the Environment Court Practice Note 2023. This technical report has been prepared in accordance with that Code. In particular, unless I state otherwise, the opinions I express are within my area of expertise, and I have not omitted to consider material facts that might alter or detract from the opinions that I express.

Executive summary/overview

1. The application provides a thorough description of the project and identifies the key statutory instruments. I consider the information provided shows considerable benefits. However, I deem additional information is required to demonstrate full consistency with the CRPS and LWRP. The assessment in Volume 2G generally summarises relevant provisions but does not always provide or demonstrate clearly measurable evidence or supporting information showing how the project achieves the stated objectives and policies. The assessment in 2G also fails to assess the proposal against the objectives and policies in chapter 6 of the CRPS, chapter 6 of the CRPS focuses on the metropolitan urban area of Greater Christchurch and this includes Woodend/ Pegasus. As such, I consider additional information is required for the proposal to be considered complete from a policy planning perspective. In lieu of this, I have provided my own assessment against the relevant policies below.

2. I note that the Woodend Bypass has been identified as regionally significant under safer systems in the Canterbury Regional Land Transport Plan 2024-2034 (RLTP). Projects on this list are categorised as improvements that have wider regional or inter-regional significance, and the Woodend Bypass has been ranked 3rd based on their contribution to the 10-year RLTP strategic priorities.

Agreement with the Applicant

3. The strategic benefit of improving regional transport efficiency and safety, consistent with CRPS Objectives 6.2.1 and 6.2.2.
4. The project appropriately manages natural-hazard risk and demonstrates consistency with CRPS Policy 11.3.1 by incorporating design mitigation rather than increasing vulnerability.
5. The proposal is consistent with CRPS Policy 6.3.5, which directs that Regional Significant Infrastructure (RSI) should be provided for, while ensuring effects are managed. The project advances regional-scale infrastructure outcomes aligned with that policy.
6. The proposal supports economic efficiency and community wellbeing, consistent with CRPS Objective 5.2.1 and LWRP Objective 3.13.
7. The project represents an efficient and strategic use of existing physical resources, consistent with Policy 5.3.2 and LWRP Objective 3.12.
8. The project is generally consistent with CRPS Objectives 6.2.1 and 6.2.2, if access management controls prevent new ribbon development along the bypass.

Benefits of the project

9. CRPS Objectives 6.2.1 - 6.2.2 and Policies 6.3.1 - 6.3.4 seek to achieve integrated land-use and transport systems that improve accessibility, safety and efficiency, and support the strategic transport network.
    a. The bypass removes through traffic and heavy vehicles from the Woodend township, improving safety and local amenity.
    b. It enhances resilience of the north south corridor, identified as a strategic route in regional and national transport planning.
    c. It enables more efficient freight movement between Christchurch, Pegasus and North Canterbury, consistent with CRPS Policy 6.3.2 (supporting key transport infrastructure).
    d. It is broadly consistent with regional transport objectives in the LWRP (Policy 4.100) that recognise infrastructure's role in supporting sustainable regional development.
10. CRPS Objective 11.2.1 and Policies 11.3.1 - 11.3.2 seek to avoid or mitigate natural-hazard risks through siting and design of infrastructure.
    a. The bypass alignment avoids flood-prone land to the extent practicable and is designed with flood conveyance structures that maintain existing flood pathways.
    b. The hydrological modelling in Vol. 2A shows negligible downstream effects on flood levels.
11. CRPS Objective 6.2.2; Policies 6.3.5 and 6.3.6 recognise that regionally significant infrastructure has an essential role in the wellbeing of Canterbury and must be enabled within environmental limits.
    a. The State Highway 1 corridor is classified as RSI; the proposal upgrades and strengthens this function.

    b. The project's design integrates with existing state highway connections and provides for future network growth.
12. CRPS Objective 5.2.1 and LWRP Objective 3.13 recognise the need for infrastructure that supports community wellbeing while maintaining environmental bottom lines.
    a. The bypass is projected to reduce congestion, improve freight reliability and travel times, and enhance access for northern settlements.
    b. By diverting heavy vehicles away from Woodend's main street, it will potentially improve safety, air quality and amenity, benefiting community wellbeing.
13. CRPS Policy 5.3.2 and LWRP Objective 3.12 promote the efficient use of land and infrastructure while avoiding significant adverse environmental effects.
    a. The proposal re-uses existing transport corridors where possible, avoiding the need for multiple new routes.
    b. The design incorporates measures to minimise resource use (for example, reuse of fill and materials management within the corridor).
14. CRPS Chapter 6 supports infrastructure that aligns with the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy and consolidates urban form.
    a. The bypass supports planned growth areas in Kaiapoi, Pegasus and Ravenswood by improving access and managing traffic pressures through existing settlements.

Outstanding areas of contention and significance of these

Key Areas of Incompleteness from a Policy Planning Perspective

Policy Area	Relevant Provisions	Completeness Finding	Further Information Required
Freshwater quality and effects management hierarchy	LWRP Objectives 3.1 - 3.3, 3.8; Policies 4.1 - 4.4 CRPS Objectives 7.2.1 - 7.2.3; Policy 7.3.6	The policy assessment does not clearly demonstrate that freshwater quality will be maintained or improved, or that the “avoid, minimise, remedy” hierarchy has been applied. Cumulative effects on receiving catchments are not addressed.	A freshwater outcomes and monitoring plan including baseline data, measurable indicators, thresholds and adaptive actions; brief cumulative effects summary.
Wetlands and indigenous biodiversity	LWRP Objectives 3.6, 3.18; Policies 4.81 - 4.89 CRPS Objectives 9.2.1 - 9.2.3; Policies 9.3.1 - 9.3.3	Offsetting/compensation lacks quantified metrics, hierarchy justification, and long-term legal securement.	Detailed offset/compensation plan plus avoidance/minimisation matrix.
Groundwater and community drinking-water protection	LWRP Objectives 3.8 - 3.12; Policies 4.8, 4.11 CRPS Policy 7.3.7	Multiple CDWPZs intersect the alignment. No baseline data or contingency measures are provided/ demonstrated clearly.	Groundwater monitoring and contingency plan with baseline sampling, thresholds, and response procedures.

Contaminated land management	LWRP Policies 4.18 - 4.19	Contaminated Sites Management Plan (CSMP) references are general; contaminant thresholds and verification processes not stated.	Expanded CSMP including trigger levels, disposal/treatment methods, and independent validation reporting.
Stream morphology and fish passage	LWRP Policies 4.94 - 4.97 CRPS Policy 7.3.6(2)	Culvert and diversion design details are not provided/ clearly demonstrated to confirm natural character and fish passage.	Culvert design summaries confirming compliance with NZ Fish Passage Guidelines and post construction monitoring plan.
Integration of land use and transport	CRPS Objectives 6.2.1 - 6.2.2; Policies 6.3.1 - 6.3.4	Assessment focuses on travel time and safety but omits analysis of mode shift, induced demand, and integration with consolidated growth.	Transport land use integration statement addressing how the bypass supports CRPS 6.3.1 - 6.3.4.
Cumulative effects and adaptive management	LWRP Policy 4.3; CRPS Policy 7.3.9	Adaptive management framework not specified; unclear how monitoring results will inform future action.	Framework showing thresholds, review triggers, and corrective measures tied to monitoring outcomes.